



16721

NMC Policy Letter 07-02

27 March 2002

From: Commanding Officer, USCG National Maritime Center

To: Distribution

Subj: QUALIFICATIONS FOR A LICENSE AS MATE (PILOT) ON TOWING VESSELS

1. PURPOSE. This policy letter provides information for license applicants seeking to qualify for a license as mate (pilot) of towing vessels. It applies to license applicants who:

- a. Began the service or training on towing vessels before 21 May 2001; and
- b. Will complete all requirements for license issuance before 21 May 2003.

2. ACTION.

- a. Commanding officers of units with a Regional Examination Center (REC) shall be guided by the information in this policy letter.
- b. Commanding officers of units with marine safety responsibilities should bring this policy letter to the attention of the maritime industry and to institutions within their area of responsibility that offer U. S. Coast Guard approved training.
- c. This policy letter will be distributed by electronic means only. It is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.uscg.mil/STCW/m-policy.htm>.

3. BACKGROUND. Interim regulations were published allowing applicants who began service or training to obtain a license as operator of uninspected towing vessels the authority to obtain the new license as master of towing vessels. The interim rule did not address the former license of second-class operator of uninspected towing vessels, which corresponds to the license as mate (pilot) towing vessels due to the limited number of such licenses issued in the past. The towing industry requested we consider an additional advancement path for individuals who entered service or training before 21 May 2001 that would lead to a license as mate (pilot) of towing vessels. This policy letter addresses that request. Because the mate's license when compared to the master's license requires reduced sea service, the deadline for completion of the qualification requirements is also changed. To qualify for a license as mate (pilot) of towing vessels the applicant must complete all requirements prior to 21 May 2003.

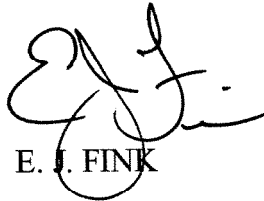
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4. DISCUSSION. A mariner may obtain a license as mate (pilot) of towing vessels in accordance with this policy provided he or she holds documentary evidence demonstrating relevant service or training before 21 May 2001. The applicant must also fully qualify for the license, including completion of all testing requirements, before 21 May 2003. To be eligible for the license, a mariner must either:

a. Provide proof of at least 18 months service on deck, including at least 12 months on towing vessels, and at least three months of training or duty in the wheelhouse of towing vessels. The sea service must include at least three months of service in each geographic area for which licensure is requested; or

b. Provide proof of at least six months of service on towing vessels while holding a merchant mariner's document endorsed as able seaman unlimited, able seaman limited, or able seaman special. The service must include three months service in the wheelhouse in each particular geographic area for which licensure is requested. In addition, the applicant must provide proof of either two months of training or duty in the wheelhouse or one month of training or duty in the wheelhouse along with completion of an approved course that substitutes for such service.

5. Mariners who provide evidence of the above service may qualify for a license as mate (pilot) of towing vessels, and may be issued an endorsement as master of towing vessels for a limited local area within the scope of the inland route (inland waters or Western rivers) within the authority of the license. After completion of an additional 18 months of service operating towing vessels, the mate (pilot) of towing vessels license may be upgraded to master of towing vessels. Those mariners with limited service, as determined by the cognizant Officer in Charge Marine Inspection, will receive licenses as mate (pilot) of towing vessel (limited). After an additional 12 months of service, operating towing vessels, the licenses will be upgraded to master of towing vessels (limited).



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